

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TAGS: PFOR OGEN YO US

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT: NATO "DARK IMAGE 74"

MANUEVERS

REF: STATE 064938; BELGRADE 1530

1. SUMMARY: YUGOSLAV MEDIA APRIL 3 SHARPLY ESCALATE REACTION TO NATO MANEUVERS IN NORTHERN ADRIATIC AT TIME OF STRAINED YUGOSLAV-ITALIAN RELATIONS OVER TRIESTE QUESTION, AND CITE JOINT ITALIAN-US EXERCISE AS "PROVOCATION", AND "ATTEMPT TO INTIMIDATE PEACE-LOVING AND NONALIGNED COUNTRY". END SUMMARY.

2. BELGRADE LEADING DAILY POLITIKA APRIL 3 CARRIES COMMENTARY BY BOZIDAR DIKIC, HEADLINED "MISUE OF ADRIATIC", WHICH MAINTAINS THAT COMBINED US-ITALIAN MANEUVERS ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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IN CONCERT WITH ANTI-YUGOSLAV CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY ROME

OVER TRIESTE QUESTION, WHICH HAS CAUSED "GRAVE CRISIS" IN GOY-GOI RELATIONS AND SERIOUS DISTURBANCE IN ATMOSPHERE OF CENTRAL EUROPE. COMMENTARY CHARGES ROME NOW ATTEMPTS WITH MANEUVERS TO "HARNESS NATO TO CART OF ITS IRREDENTIST POLICY", AND DESCRIBES IDEA OF INCLUDING HUGE MILITARY BLOC IN INTRIGUE TO BRING PRESSURE ON YUGOSLAVIA AS "SHEER NONSENSE". NEITHER CAN ROME IMPROVE ITS INTERNAL TROUBLES BY "ATLANTIZATION OF TRIESTE AND TRIESTE QUESTION", ADDS COMMENTARY. DIKIC MAINTAINS THAT THERE ARE "NO VISIBLE SIGNS" THAT OTHER NATO MEMBERS WERE EITHER CONSULTED BEFOREHAND OR APPROVED OF SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS IN NORTHERN ADRIATIC.

3. SIMILAR, PAGE-ONE COMMENTARY (UNSIGNED) IN APRIL 3 BELGRADE DAILY BORBA, DESCRIBES COMBINED MANEUVERS AS, "DANGEROUS REVIVAL OF GHOSTS FROM COLD-WAR PERIOD", NEW AGGRAVATION IN YUGOSLAV-ITALIAN RELATIONS, AND INTENSIFIED CONTINUATION OF ANTI-YUGOSLAV CAMPAIGN. BORBA WRITES THAT IT IS NOT MERELY "UNFORTUNATE CONCURRENCE OF EVENTS WHICH LED TO AMERICAN GUNBOATS APPEARING IN ADRIATIC, JUST WHEN OFFICIAL ITALIAN POLICY COINCIDED WITH ASPIRATIONS AND TERRITORIAL CLAIMS OF IRREDENTISTS AND FASCISTS TO SOME YUGOSLAV AREAS". FOR EVEN IF THIS WERE "WORSE POSSIBLE COINCIDENCE", CONTINUES BORBA, SHIPS OF US SIXTH FLEET, WHOSE ROUTES DO NOT LIE IN ADRIATIC, "WOULD NOT HAVE ACCEPTED 'HOSPITALITY' OF TRIESTE, SINCE THEY MAY HAVE CHOSEN ANY ITALIAN PORT FOR SUCH DEMONSTRATION, WITHOUT PRESENT SENSE OF PROVOCATION". BORBA ADDS ALSO THAT OTHER NATO MEMBERS PROBABLY ARE NOT AWARE OF "EXTREMELY DELICATE POSITION" IN WHICH THESE MANEUVERS HAVE PLACED THEM -- IN PRESENT STATE OF YUGOSLAV-ITALIAN RELATIONS.

4. TANJUG BULLETIN APRIL 3 CARRIES COMMENTARY BY DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, VELIMIR BUDIMIR, WHICH DESCRIBES JOINT MANEUVERS IN NORTHERN ADRIATIC AS "LATEST STEP IN ESCALATION OF PRESSURES" AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA. "IN DARK SHADOW OF IRREDENTIST CLAIMS", WRITES BUDIMIR, SUCH JOINT MANEUVERS CONSTITUTE CLEAR AND DEFINITE PRESSURE AGAINST YUGOSLAVIA, "NO MATTER HOW DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WANT TO EXPLAIN THEM TO COMPETENT YUGOSLAV ORGANS." BUDIMIR
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CLAIMS THAT THIS IS FIRST TIME UNITS OF US SIXTH FLEET HAVE PARTICIPATED IN ADRIATIC MANEUVERS, AND ASKS WHY ADRIATIC, WHICH HAS BEEN ZONE OF PEACE, IS BEING DISTURBED AT THIS TIME. BUDIMIR CONSIDERS INCREASING ANTI-YUGOSLAV ACTIVITY, ALONG WITH VARIOUS "FABRICATIONS AND SPECULATIONS" ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA IS RESULT OF YUGOSLAVIA'S INCREASING ROLE AMONG NONALIGNED AND ITS STRUGGLE FOR PRINCIPLES OF SELF-MANAGEMENT.

5. BELGRADE TV EVENING NEWS (DNEVNIK) APRIL 2 JOINED IN
CONCERT OF PROTEST WITH "DRAMATIC" NEWS COMMENTARY BY
VELIMIR POPOVIC. IN HEAVY TONE, POPOVIC REFERRED TO
TIMING OF ITALIAN NOTE ON TRIESTE AND COMBINED MANEUVERS
OF ITALIAN-AMERICAN FORCES IN AREA, WHICH HE LABELED AS
"ITALO-AMERICAN PROVOCATION". POPOVIC ALSO CITED "TREMENDOUS
PRESSURE" BEING APPLIED TO YUGOSLAVIA, AND SPECULATIVE
REPORTS BY FOREIGN SOURCES OF YUGOSLAVIA'S "DISINTEGRATION",
RUMORS OF PRESIDENT'S "ILLNESS", AND SO-CALLED "PLANNED
INVASION FROM EAST". COMMENTARY CONCLUDED WITH AVOWAL OF
YUGOSLAVIA'S INTENTION TO DEFEND ITS RIGHTS.

6. ZAGREB COVERAGE PARALLELS ABOVE AND OTHER REPUBLIC
MEDIA WILL DOUBTLESS FOLLOW SUIT.
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